



Special Partnership Trust



Date Last Reviewed: April 2021

Review Date: April 2022



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Roles and responsibilities of the Whistleblowing Governor

- *These roles and responsibilities must be considered in accordance to the SPT safeguarding and whistle-blowing policies*

Definition of whistleblowing:

Whistleblowing is when someone raises a concern about a dangerous or illegal activity or any wrongdoing within their organisation.

Raising a concern is known as "**blowing the whistle**" and is a vital process for identifying risks to people's safety.

Sharing information or talking through a concern can be the first step to helping an organisation identify problems and improve their practices.

Please consider:

- You may be the first point of contact for the whistle-blower who might be anxious and distressed about raising concerns; you should be supportive and put them at ease
- You will need to act in an open manner and take the employees concerns seriously
- As a first step, you will need to determine whether the concern has been raised with the line management of the school (HT/ SLT) and if not encourage them to do so; direct the whistle-blower to the whistleblowing policy
- If the whistle-blower does not feel confident about taking their concern to their line manager, you may need to act as an impartial intermediary between the individual raising the concern and other parties
- Where you consider the concern involves a serious breach, you will need to advise the Director of the Trust who will contact the LADO
- It is **not** your role to reach any decision on any matter of concern

What is the role of the Head Teacher?

- It should be hoped that in most cases an employee will feel able to raise concerns internally with the Head Teacher/ SLT, speaking to them or putting the matter in writing if they prefer through such means, they may be able to agree a way of resolving a concern quickly and effectively
- In some cases, the matter may be referred by the Head Teacher to the Governing body/ Trustees or a nominated Governor who has the responsibility for whistleblowing
- Once a concern has been raised the Head Teacher will arrange a meeting with the employee as soon as practicable to discuss their concern; they will record enough details to enable the matter to be thoroughly investigated
- As a minimum, they will record the name of the employee but also indicate whether an individual wishes his or her identity to remain confidential and the nature of the concern. In some cases, it will not be possible to maintain confidentiality and the Head Teacher will explain this to the employee



- In such instances the employee will have the choice of either withdrawing or agreeing to his/ her identify becoming known to enable the concern to be effectively dealt with
- Dependent upon the nature of the concern raised the Head Teacher may escalate the concern and bring it to the attention of the LADO who will investigate
- As a result of any investigation you will be informed of any outcomes via an information report, this report may recommend further action (this report is highly confidential)
- Once the matter has been investigated, the school should notify the employee of the outcome

What is my role as the whistle-blowing governor?

- Advise staff on the whistle-blowing policy and direct them to it if they have not seen it
- Support whistle-blowers and line managers in dealing with a concern or potential concern, acting as a central point of contact for the whistle-blower
- Re-assure whistle-blowers of the importance of raising concerns internally and the protection available from following whistle-blowing procedure
- Maintain records of approaches and provide summary information to the HT/ SLT/ Director of the whistle-blowing concern; this does not mean the whistleblowing governor will undertake any investigation

How can I ensure confidentiality to the whistle-blower?

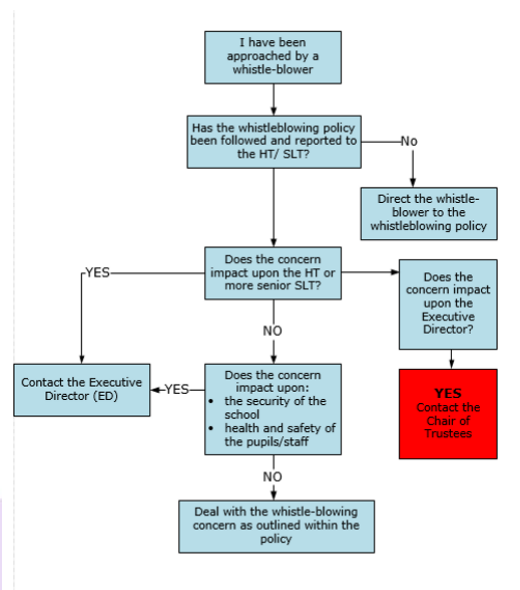
Whistle-blowing can be a sensitive area and whistle-blowers may be concerned about their identity being revealed, therefore:

- It is good practice to respect a whistle-blowers wish for confidentiality as far as possible by restricting it to a 'needs to know' basis whenever this is possible
- You should advise the whistle-blower that it is best to raise concerns openly with the HT as this makes it easier for the school/ Trust to investigate and to provide feedback
- You should also remind them that help, and support is available to whistle-blowers who raise genuine concerns under the whistle-blowing procedures

How do you decide how to proceed?

- When approached by a whistle-blower with a potential whistle-blowing concern, you will need to ask if the concern has been raised at a management level
- If yes, a whistle-blower might be approaching you if they feel their concern has not been adequately addressed, it will **not** be your role to investigate this but there will be a need to pass their concern onto the HT/ SLT/ Director (if/as required)
- Consider if the concern is so serious that it needs to be brought to the attention of the HT/ SLT/ CEO straight away, if so you will need to escalate the concern (see flow-chart below)





What level of advice can I give? *The extent of your role may vary in any instance; the HT/CEO can offer advice and guidance here if/as required*

- You should provide support to the whistle-blower who has raised the concern
- You should remind the whistle-blower about confidentiality (unauthorised disclosure) and not to discuss the matter with any person other than the named individual at the school while the matter is under investigation
- Advise the whistle-blower whether a concern does fall under the whistleblowing policy (it could be a complaint that the whistle-blower has raised) if you are less sure seek advice from the HT
- Offer to be a central point of contact for the whistle-blower; relay to the whistle-blower that you will not be taking part in any investigation
- Reassure employees about the protection available to them under the whistleblowing policy/procedure i.e. – confidentially

What records should you keep?

- The date the issue was raised
- The outcome, including how the issue was resolved and by whom
- How long the process took?
- Ensure all records remain confidential



How do I deal with an anonymous complaint?

- If you receive an anonymous concern it should be treated as credible until further steps have been taken to investigate the issue
- If you are approached by an anonymous case, you should advise that it will be recorded and sent to the HT/ SLT/ CEO (if/as appropriate) in case the same issue is raised in the future

What do I need to do if the whistle-blower does not think the response was satisfactory?

- If all internal routes have been exhausted and the employee still does not believe they have had a reasonable response, they may contact the chair of Trustees or raise their concern with the LADO

